

Colonel TODHUNTER of Missouri

By RIPLEY D. SAUNDERS

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(Continued.)

CHAPTER VI.

The Strickland-Tucker Feud.

HALF an hour later as Colonel Todhunter emerged from the law office of Judge Bolling he heard a sudden hurrying of footsteps, and Sam Birdsong joined him, breathless and much perturbed.

"What's on your mind now, Sam?" asked the colonel. "Hain't often you gallopin' aroun' with your tongue hangin' out o' your mouth like a young dog's in his first rabbit chase. What's the trouble?"

"I was jes' startin' out to look you up, colonel," replied Sam. "There's trouble enough, suh. Tom Strickland's got to drinkin' and picked a quarrel with Stam Tucker in the hotel bar-room, and you better come quick, suh, and prevent his bein' a mighty serious difficulty."

"I ain't got no patience with you young fellows here in Nineveh, Sam Birdsong," commented the colonel. "When Tom Strickland gets two or three drinks under his belt and wants to pick a fuss why don't some of you turn in and lick the stuffin' outa him? That's one of the best cures for the whisky quarrelin' habit that ever was invented, suh."

The colonel chuckled as he spoke. "The most quarrelsome man in his cups I ever knew, Sam, was old Bob Prewitt, in my regiment durin' the late unpleasantness, and he was cured just that way, suh. Sam Fossbrooke made a point of campin' on Bob's trail ever time Bob got to naggin' any o' the other fellows, and Sam'd thrash Bob till his own mother wouldn't ha' known him, suh. And, suh, before the war was over I'll be double hamstringed if Bob Prewitt wasn't a teetotaler, suh, and he never got fightin' drunk after the war neither till he'd put two whole counties between him and Sam Fossbrooke. Some of you boys ought to try that plan on Tom Strickland, Sam."

"Colonel," answered Sam solemnly, "it's a sort o' curse on the Stricklands, that fierce temper o' their'n when they get under the influence of lickin', suh. You mustn't forget that Tom's own uncle killed his best friend, Lawrence Todhunter, durin' a spree and then drank himself to death afterwards tryin' to forget it, suh. It's a curse, suh, that's what it is!"

"It ain't no curse that can't be lifted easy as raisin' your little finger, Sam Birdsong," said the colonel. "All in the world Tom Strickland's got to do is to leave whisky alone—he ain't a hard drinker now, and maybe he never will be, but he's got to leave it alone altogether. It don't agree with him. The Todhunters has got that same kind of a curse in their family, only it's cucumbers 'stead of whisky. Th' ain't none of us Todhunters can eat cucumbers without bein' doubled up with cramp colic. Well, suh, I lifted that curse by eatin' cucumbers out o' my list of vittin' same as if such a thing never growed, and Tom Strickland or any other man can do the same thing with whisky, suh."

Then the colonel tapped Sam on the shoulder. "And let me tell you one thing, my boy," he continued. "All this here talk about the terrible hard fight necessary to break out from a bad habit makes me tired, suh. A man don't never have to fight but one day's fight at a time, and there's always a night's rest comin' in between if he don't lay awake pityin' himself, suh. I know what I'm a-talkin' about. It ain't but a twelve hours' fight no time, and a man who can't fight that long is a mighty mealy specimen of a man, suh."

"That's all very well, colonel," spoke Sam uneasily, "but Tom has egged Stam Tucker on till Stam's hurried out o' the barroom, white in the face, holier'n over his shoulder that he'll be back in a minute and you know just what that means, suh."

Colonel Todhunter's face grew instantly grave. "He's gone to get his shootin' iron—the d—d little fool!" he exclaimed. "Tell me, Sam, is Tom Strickland armed?"

"I don't think he is, suh, but he's a-waitin' for Stam Tucker in that there barroom, and he's jes' feelin' reckless enough to give Stam every chance in the world for shootin' him after he himself picked the fuss and forced the personal difficulty, colonel."

"You come along with me, Sam," said the colonel. "Why the blazes and Sam Hill didn't you tell me all this at the start, suh?"

Swiftly they crossed the town square and entered the barroom of the Nineveh hotel. Tom Strickland, alone now but for the bartender, stood with one elbow resting on the bar.

"Howdy, colonel," he cried. "You and Sam are just in time to join me in a drink, suh. What'll you have?"

"Tom," replied the colonel, "ordinarily I'd be glad to accept your invitation, but not today, my boy. I want you to go home, Tom."



Tom's Fist Smashed into His Face and Felled Him to the Floor.

called the turn, sir, and under the circumstances you'll have to agree with me that I can't go now—not for a few minutes anyway."

"I don't agree to no such thing, you blamed young fool!" ejaculated Colonel Todhunter. "Do you reckon I'm a-goin' to let you and Stam Tucker shoot each other full o' holes or let you wait, unarmed, for him to get a crack at you just because you've seen fit to come into town and begin drinkin', suh?"

"We're both free white and twenty-one, colonel," said Tom Strickland. "How are you goin' to prevent it?"

At this Colonel Todhunter lost his temper. "I'll prevent it by thrashin' you within an inch of your life, suh, if you don't turn right around and get out o' this here barroom, that's how!" he announced resolutely. "I ain't a-goin' to stand no foolishness, Tom!"

"That ain't fair, Colonel Todhunter," protested Tom Strickland. "You're Miss Mary's father, and you're my father's oldest and best friend, sir. I wouldn't lift my hand against you for the world—but I've got to wait here till Stam Tucker gets back!"

"Tom," said Colonel Todhunter, "you've either got to go home right now, suh, or thrash me, or take the best thrashin' from me you ever get in all your life, suh!"

Tom Strickland looked into Colonel Todhunter's eyes. They shone with the light of righteous battle. It was a preposterous situation. The humor of it suddenly struck the younger man, and he laughed outright. Then, suddenly, looking beyond Colonel Todhunter, his own eyes hardened into a dangerous anger.

"It's too late, colonel!" he exclaimed exultantly. "Here comes the very man we're talking about!"

As he spoke Stamford Tucker entered the barroom, advancing directly toward him.

"I reckon you still insist on a personal difficulty with me, Tom Strickland," he asked. "You ain't changed your mind none since the last few minutes?"

"I don't change my mind that easy," replied Tom Strickland, smiling. "Especially when a little upstart like you gets to talkin' too freely about my father. You've got to stop it or else make up your mind to take the consequences."

"It ain't what I've said about your father that's rubbin' you the wrong way," retorted Stam Tucker. "It's because you've found out that I'm standin' too good a chance with Miss Mary Todhunter to suit you."

Tom Strickland sprang at the speaker. As he did so Stam whipped out a pistol. It was quickly done, but not quick enough to give an opportunity to fire before the other struck. Tom's fist smashed into his face and felled him to the floor. The pistol flew ten feet away.

There was a moment's silence. "Get up," said Tom, "and come at me like a man. I'll thrash you within an inch of your life!"

Stam Tucker staggered to his feet, wiping the blood from his face. But he made no move toward the man who had struck him.

Tom Strickland stepped coolly to where the pistol lay, picked it up deliberately and put it into his own pocket.

"I'll get even with you for this, Strickland!" cried young Tucker. "I'll even up things before I'm done with you!"

"You'll never have a better time than right now," replied Tom. "But if you ain't in the humor I'll leave your pistol with the bartender here in a little while and you can get it later. But I give you fair warning, Stam Tucker. The next time you make a move for a weapon you're going to get badly hurt. I'll be ready for you since you insist on it."

Stam Tucker moved toward the door. His little eyes were venomous with hate.

"I'll get even with you!" he repeated. "You'll suffer for this yet!" And then he disappeared.

"You've played the wild on your watch, Tom," said Colonel Todhunter sternly. "This ain't no time for you to be pickin' fights with old Eph Tucker's son. It don't look right, and it won't help your father none in his political fight, either."

"I didn't bring it on, colonel," replied Tom Strickland. "Stamford Tucker's seen fit to say things about my father that no man can say and not get a licking from me, if I'm man enough to lick him. That's all there is to it, sir."

To save his life Colonel Todhunter could not continue his rebuke. But he managed to part from Tom Strickland with something like an expression of disapproval on his countenance.

Suddenly one day during the campaign the Hon. William J. Strickland returned from St. Louis. An expression of acute worryment so contrary to its customary cheerfulness rested on his face that Colonel Todhunter, entering the candidate's Nineveh law office, could not but remark the change.

"What on earth's the matter, Bill?" he asked. "You look like the last rose o' summer."

Colonel Strickland attempted a smile. "Oh, nothing particular, Thurst," he replied. "I reckon I was just meditating on the vanity of human life."

"Well, it must have been a pretty severe La Grippe cough which, completely exhausted me. Foley's Honey and Tar Compound soon stopped the coughing spells entirely. It can't be beat!" P. B. Edgar, Stratford, Conn., and Sixth street.—Adv. * 135

"You're lyin' to me, Bill Strickland," he said. "There's somethin' gone wrong, and it's on your mind. What is it?"

"Thurst," responded the other, "it ain't anything you can help. There's no good in my unloadin' my troubles on you just because you've got broad shoulders."

"Unload 'em anyhow," returned Colonel Todhunter. "You ought to know folks can shed other folks' troubles off'n their shoulders like water from a duck's back."

But Colonel Strickland shook his head. "There's been a basket somewhere along the line," announced Colonel Todhunter stubbornly. "And you've got to tell me what it is. Quit settin' there lookin' like a poor man at a cash sale, Bill Strickland, dumb, 'cause money's all that talks."

At this Colonel Strickland laughed heartily. "That's where you hit the nail on the head," he said. "Money, the mean and dirty thing that can whip the best man in the world—that's the trouble, Thurst."

"It's generally the other man's money that looks dirty, Bill," Colonel Todhunter commented, chuckling. "I got to acknowledge the corn myself. I never had a dollar of my own that didn't look mighty clean and good to me. But what's this particular money trouble?"

(To be Continued.)

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"Yes, if you're the first lar she has ever met."—Baltimore American.



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"I reckon I ain't cut out to preach to other people when they should do and what they shouldn't," he confessed to himself later. "I ought to have given."

ENTERTAINMENTS AND THEATRICAL GOSSIP

POLI'S — VAUDEVILLE

(By the Poli Press Agent.)

"Prince Floro makes perfect monkeys out of all other 'almost human' simians that have been put on the American stage."

That sentiment, expressed last night by a theatregoer, just about characterizes the intelligence and humor of Prince Floro, the educated chimpanzee, featured at Poli's new theatre this week. All over the city, folks who have seen this marvelous animal—born a monkey, but a man by training—are talking of his cleverness. The Prince orders a meal, with the nonchalance of our best little bon vivant. He enjoys a smoke, can handle a telephone, work a typewriter and is great for physical culture. His bicycle riding feats occupy a prominent part in his athletic routine. The Prince is appearing twice daily at Poli's and has already captivated the town.

Seven other big feature acts make up the Poli program for this week. The offerings include those musical comedy favorites, Wilbur Mack and Nella Walker, in "Their New Flirtation"; one of the daintiest musical skits ever seen here, "Then, There are George Rolland and company in Billy Burke's riotous farce, 'Fixing the Burner'; the funniest thing at the Poli house this year.

The Frey Twins have a great offering in their statueque poses and wrestling exhibition. Other big features are DuCalle, in his monologue atop a shanty ladder; Billy "Swede" Hall and company in the comedy drama, "Made Good"; Hilda Hawthorne, a singing and ventriloquist; Davis and Walker, singers and dancers extraordinary; and the Poliscopes with the latest in animated photography.

This is another of Manager Poli's big feature bills and is getting the patronage that such high class entertainment warrants. Seats should be reserved at once for the remaining performances by phoning to 2910.

A COLD, LA GRIPPE.

Is too often the fatal sequence. La Grippe coughs hang on, weaken the system, and lower the vital resistance. R. G. Collins, Postmaster, Barnegat, N. J., says: "I was troubled with a severe La Grippe cough which, completely exhausted me. Foley's Honey and Tar Compound soon stopped the coughing spells entirely. It can't be beat!" P. B. Edgar, Stratford, Conn., and Sixth street.—Adv. * 135

EASTON

Although last Friday evening proved very stormy, several ventured out to see the three plays which the Aspetuck Dramatic Club presented at the Central Street Methodist hall, and they all felt well repaid.

Miss Alice Mallette, having visited her sister, Miss Ruth Mallette, in New York, has returned home.

Miss Mabel Edwards and Frank Edwards, Jr., attended the surprise party given to Walter Jennings in honor of his twentieth birthday at Hoyden's Hill. The evening was spent very pleasantly in playing games. Those who won the first prizes at what were Miss Etta Brothwell and Frank Edwards, Jr., and the consolations were received by Mrs. Mabel MacDonald and Harold Gifford. The "peanut hunt" was very much enjoyed and Miss Clara MacDonald and her husband were victorious.

Found the greatest number in the given time. David Wilson received for the riddle contest, "Who Am I," a hen" filled with candy. All the prizes were won by victor.

Mallette Sanford and daughter, Miss Clara Sanford, spent Saturday in Westport with Mrs. Sanford, who is there. Mr. Mrs. Sanford is now improving.

George Sprandel, the seven-year-old son of Christian Sprandel, died at his home on Saturday afternoon after an illness of several days. The funeral was held from his parents' home on Monday.

TRUMBULL

Rev. T. Yeoman Williams, pastor of the First Congregational church, will arrive in town today to spend his Easter vacation of one week doing pastoral work.

Emil T. Berger has a new telephone installed in his house. The number is 74-3.

Mrs. Dwight Fuller is entertaining her mother, Mrs. Sarah A. Sperry, of Albion street, Bridgeport.

Mr. and Mrs. John Mahoney are receiving congratulations on the birth of a son, last Saturday.

Easter Children's Convention of Bridgeport has been spending several days with his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Thornton. Mr. and Mrs. Thornton also entertained Mrs. Edwin Thornton and daughter from Bridgeport on Tuesday.

The Boys' Club met in the town hall evening. Posters stating the law concerning fires have been placed in conspicuous places about the town. Persons wishing to light bonfires from the 15th of March to the 15th of July must obtain permits from the town fire warden, Burr F. Beach.

Rollin E. Burton has received a large shipment of eggs and now has two incubators of 400 and 250 egg capacity in running order. Mr. Burton expects to go into the chicken business quite extensively and has recently completed a new house that will accommodate a large number of fowls.

Miss Mildred Tucker was in Bridgeport yesterday receiving her usual weekly vocal instructions, also attending the rehearsal of the Oratorio Singing Society at Warner hall.

Leon Wheeler, of Vermont, was visitors at the home of Mrs. J. E. Bowker, yesterday. Mr. Wheeler, in company with his mother, Mrs. N. Wheeler, have been South during the winter months, spending most of their time in Virginia and Florida and making a short stop at Washington, D. C., on their way North.

"Nothing comes to him who waits," remarked the philosopher.

How about tips? asked the friend.—Buffalo Express

THE PLAZA

(By the Plaza Press Agent.)

"The Wheel of Death" is proving one of the strongest attractions of the present Plaza Theatre vaudeville season. Crowded houses again prevailed yesterday. But outside of the big sensation, the bill is composed of five other acts, each one bearing the stamp of approval.

"The Wheel of Death" has all other dare-devil and sensational acts beat a mile, for skill and daring, Johnson and King in a farcical sketch entitled "A Business Proposal", is one of the biggest laughing acts seen in Bridgeport in some time. They just convulse the large audiences from the very start of their offering. Duke Darling, "The Man With the Green Gloves", certainly knows how to tell funny stories and his parodies are new and bright. Warr and Delmore furnished fifteen minutes of amusement with a skit involving a trunk porter and an actor at rehearsal in a theatre. The lines they introduce are exceedingly funny. Waldo, a contortionist, and Harry Fenn Dalton in a musical act, are the other features. The day-light photo plays are extraordinary. The first three days, "Put Yourself in Their Place," a Vitagraph; "The New York Fire Department Drill," also a Vitagraph; "A Bottle of Musk," an Essanay drama; "The Perret," a Selig drama; and "Auntie Affinities," a Lubin comedy, are the titles.

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Notice is hereby given, that the undersigned is required by law, to file liens against all property on which the taxes upon the list of 1911 (due May, 1912) remain unpaid on the last day of March, 1913. Payments will be received at the office of the Collector, Room 6, City Hall, up to and including Monday, March 31, 1913, without lien expense.

B. F. COONEY, Collector.

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This is the time of the year for you to do your work. Write us for estimates; 22 years in business in Bridgeport. Ask your neighbor about us if you don't know what kind of work we do. Jos. P. Coughlin Co., painters and decorators, wholesale and retail, paints, oils and wall papers. 783 East Main street. Phone 4861.

To Those Who Want

A gift for wedding presentation we suggest a view of our wedding silver or cut glass. It is exquisite, beautiful in design and workmanship and whether you send one piece or more you have the satisfaction of knowing that your gift is most appropriate and fitting. M. J. Bauchier, the reliable jeweler, 48 Fairfield avenue, near Middle street.

Horan's Grand Easter Display

The large "Easter branch" opened up by Horan & Son at Broad and State street is very attractive. Thousands of the choicest Easter lilies, azaleas, crimson ramblers, hydrangeas and basketry are offered and one wonders where all these beautiful flowering plants come from, but when one realizes that Horan's nursery consists of twenty-one greenhouses it is easy to conclude whence they come. Be sure and visit Horan's this week. Bargains for every one in plants of all kinds.

The Ladies Specialty Shop

Buy your new spring waist now! No need to wait longer, the new styles are here in all their variety. A spring waist bought now means a full season's wear, and remember Easter is only a few days away. The opportunity of spending a moderate sum on your Easter wardrobe is given to the women of Bridgeport by the Misses McCarthy at their Specialty Shop, 1225 Main St. (Under the Stratfield). The question of your Easter gloves is quickly settled, you will find here well made and perfect fitting gloves, inexpensive and fully guaranteed.

WHITEHEAD'S AUTOMATIC TRAIN CONTROL ON VIEW

Gustave Whitehead's invention for automatically controlling trains at cross-overs is to be demonstrated at the Y. M. C. A. rooms tonight, at 8 o'clock. Men, women and boys are cordially invited to view the working of the model device.

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